



Provider Supports Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

October 9, 2024 – 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Welcome, Virtual Meeting Protocols, and Introductions

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer welcomed members and completed introductions.

Review of Meeting Materials

Provider Supports Executive Committee member David Mayer led the group in the review of meeting materials.

- [August 14, 2024, Meeting Minutes](#)
- [Feedback Loop](#)
- [Child Care Health Consultation](#)
- [Agency Updates](#)

Licensing Updates

DCYF Assistant Secretary of Licensing, Ruben Reeves and Child Care Deputy Senior Administrator, Debbie Groff, provided updates from the Licensing team on First Time Forgiveness. DCYF Quality Insurance Program Manager, Deanna Sundby provided an update on the Post-Visit Licensing Survey. DCYF’s Child Care Policy and Change Management Specialist Brett Skinner and Policy and Change Management Program Supervisor Ann Radcliffe provided updates on the Family Home Capacity Waiver Process

Discussion	<p><i>First Time Forgiveness</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there something that can be done so that it is not system wide? If something is dealt with in real time and resolved while the licensor is still there, does it need to be written down? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If it is a noted violation during a visit, it will be put in an inspection report. You then have the option to ask for a review of that citation through the provider portal. ○ We are also working on something new in our inspection report: a box that says corrected on site. When a provider makes a correction while we are still present during the inspection we can check that box. • If there is an incident that comes up, we would like to have the opportunity to tell you when it has been corrected so that it is part of our record too. If you are tinkering with the system, please include this change as well. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ This is something we will consider while we revamp the inspection report. ○ When a childcare provider does email their licensor in response to the inspection report, how is the information documented? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If they're emailing regarding a correction that has been made, licensors can put the date of correction into the inspection report via the portal. They also make a provider note on the inspection case in our WA Compass system. We also make a notation that corrections have been made when we do our health and safety rechecks. • The biggest problem is the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) is up to the way a licensor reads the WAC and can change based on which licensor comes in to inspect. There needs to be some way to partner better, especially when a provider has been in service for many years and has a ton of experience.
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- Why can't an issue that's corrected during the time of inspection just be a counseling thing? It doesn't feel like there is a partnership anymore. That lack of partnership is affecting our insurance.
 - This is also coming up in our [Community Child Care Forums](#). We are going to continue to have these in-person forums in 2025 to really work on that partnership. We are really working on the inconsistency, enforcement, and interpretation of our WACs.

Post-Visit Licensing Survey

- Will the licensors see these surveys and who completes the surveys?
 - The surveys are completed by providers. The licensors will not see individual results, they are anonymous. We will pull the data quarterly or more often as needed. There will be comments section and if there is something that needs immediate attention, we will address it.
- Who is vetting the questions? What are the data points you are looking at?
 - There were some providers who were consulted on the questions. We also had our partners at DCYF Early Learning, leadership, the Office of Innovation, Alignment and Accountability (OIAA), and the Office of Racial Equity Social Justice (ORESJ) administrator. They were also sent to the union for review and feedback.
- Has the survey been adapted or tested to ensure it is accessible, meaningful and culturally responsive to individuals from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds?
 - Yes, there are a couple of questions that ask providers about the cultural responsiveness of the visit, how inclusive it was and language access.
- Monthly seems more appropriate for reports. Who will oversee follow up?
 - We will be sending the reports to field leadership, area administrators, as well as Debbie Groff and Travis Hanson. We will be looking at possible practice changes, transitions, or if there is something positive that comes out.
- Why not Washington Childcare Centers Association (WCCA)? Were any providers of color on the team that vetted the questions? Any dual language providers?
 - We did vet it through providers of color as well as different cultures through the SEIU review. We also ran the questions through our ORESJ Administrator who reviewed every question and made sure that we were being as culturally responsive as we could be in a survey format. However, if we learn that we aren't capturing what we think we should be or if this survey is not meeting the need that you were asking for, we will absolutely come back, check in again and come up with different questions.
- Who will be in charge of collecting the data? What will DCYF do with the data? Why didn't PS have involvement?
 - We will be analyzing the data for quality assurance, celebrate the successes, and look at opportunities.

Family Home Capacity Waiver Process

- How would home providers have more than 16 kids?
 - Family home providers could only have a max of 16 children.
- I don't think it's fair that home providers are allowed flexibility with numbers now that COVID is over. Centers can't do this. This hurts childcare centers if you allow these waivers to continue, etc.
- Who is making these decisions? Are providers involved in the process? Providers are the ones who are dealing with the safety, health, and all issues on a day to day basis.



- DCYF is responding to the fire and building officials. We're trying to design a system and process but some of the things were not dictated by the licensing division. One of the biggest things that fire officials require in most cases are sprinkler systems. That is going to be the biggest cost piece.
 - We need to sit down together (DCYF, the fire and building officials with providers) and work to find reasonable solutions in a positive way.
 - WACs do continue to be updated and changed, and we always need providers to participate in that process. We do need to continue to have these conversations.
- I had a waiver during COVID to increase capacity for my center and that ended a long time ago. I was afforded two options, either to permanently apply for an increase and add a bathroom or it ended. Are there any centers that had extended waivers or did that just apply to home providers?
 - We did extend waivers through COVID for all providers, centers, and family homes. Those waivers were closed at the end of the pandemic. This is a new waiver process that was put into rules specifically for family homes. That's what we're addressing now is the shift in building code since the WAC went into place. Now we're having to amend that WAC to meet building code.
 - Do you know why centers weren't also allowed the same opportunity?
 - In May 2021, the legislature passed the Fair Start for Kids Act, which allows DCYF to waive the licensing cap of 12 children for family home providers and requires the department to establish conditions for such waivers in rule.
- It sounds like another double standard that holds childcare centers to overly burdensome regulations while minimizing regulations for family homes and no regulations for transition to kindergarten.
- Maybe this needs to be put on hold until this is a fair process for centers and homes. I understand it allows you to approve waivers, but it doesn't say you have to. I think this is not the way to handle a capacity issue.
- If the capacity is a safety issue for family homes, what is the hesitation to eliminate the waivers?
 - Part of the reason is there is continuity with families involved. Providers have kids on subsidy and would lose spaces which could be challenging for families. Transportation and other things could be involved. We were trying to listen to concerns of family home providers and give people time to make the transition in a meaningful way.
- Does this waiver apply to new daycares that have opened this year?
 - When the fire and building officials weighed in on their concerns about there being more than 12, we put a stop to any new applications for these waivers. We didn't take away waivers from people who already had them but once we get to March, those waivers will be rescinded. Then any interested family home provider can put in an application to try and get this capacity increase. There will be some requirements around it; you need to be on a full non-expiring license.
- Believing that people start with good intent is important too. There was good intent with this during COVID to address specific childcare desert needs so children weren't displaced. We are pivoting alongside many of our Family Homes to ensure we aren't displacing children now that the Fire Marshal has different mandates we must also follow.



<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please reach out to Ruben (ruben.reeves@dcyf.wa.gov), Debbie (debbie.groff@dcyf.wa.gov), Deanna (deanna.sundby@dcyf.wa.gov), Brett (brett.skinner@dcyf.wa.gov) and Ann (ann.radcliffe@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.
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Early Care and Education Access and Living Wage Proviso

DCYF’s Early Care and Education Access Project Manager Diana Stokes provided a progress update on the Early Care and Education Access and Living Wage Proviso.

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is this all going to be paid for? I know what the goals are and I'm excited about it, but it has to be a big price tag. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will require an investment. As we move through the legislative session, the decision packages are phase one of this work. Depending on how those are funded will guide us moving forward. Shouldn't WCCA be added to the discussion group list? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nicole Rose is working with WCCA in other areas, but we are working with licensed childcare centers. It’s important for people to advocate for families with special needs so that they can still qualify for subsidy and continue to be enrolled in high quality programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I agree; A lot of families are being affected when they are not requalifying for subsidy with special needs children. Is living wage going to be paid directly to staff or subsidy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are still working through this. We have an existing subsidy system and as we get to that cost of quality care, the goal would be to use that. Is this a program that has an expiration date? Employers cannot afford to absorb the wages if the program has an expiration date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No, this is hopefully a forever thing. That will be part of the implementation plan of what does it take to get there and then how do we sustain it. Children with special needs, foster kids and homeless children should be subsidized regardless of family income. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanks for highlighting how income eligibility impacts children with special needs, foster children, and children experiencing homelessness. This will require a significant investment into the subsidy system to support categorical eligibility. Categorical eligibility or "CE" is the concept that children are automatically eligible. Will the special needs process for application ever be simplified? Because I’m an Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) provider, I can no longer apply for complex needs which has created an issue. Would DCYF ever look at individual centers to be able to apply just to cover the extra wages that it costs to be inclusive? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I will pass this along to the team that manages that program. The children during the pandemic are showing difficulty for speech and being social. Are there any opportunity for in home providers to receive extra professional help to work with children in the home? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children we are serving today are not the same children we were serving before covid or even ten years ago. We are having conversations around how to best serve these children and what kind of professional development opportunities are needed. We are also thinking about the special needs rates when it comes to subsidy. I would like there to be more support for families especially if they are trying to increase the capacity to sixteen. One of my worries is that parents are not qualifying. I would suggest increase the wage they are able to earn to qualify.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DCYF is looking at how to expand eligibility for Working Connections. The current decision package is asking that it be 75% of the state medium income so that more families will be eligible in 2025. Then up to 85% of the state medium income in 2026. ● Before qualifying someone, DCYF should really work to understand the family and their expenses, not just their income. Prices are increasing for everything. If we only base our decision to make them eligible on what they are earning, we are not seeing the big picture and taking into consideration of all of their expenses. There are so many families having their benefits taken away when it's time to do a renewal. ● As a center we chose not to participate in it because we knew we could not maintain the wages that the staff were being paid at the time. If your background check follows you as the employee, maybe the wages should follow too and not be at the center level. Then the centers aren't going to be responsible for it if the program actually goes away. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ I will look more into the history and functionality with that.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to Diana (diana.stokes@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow up questions.

Enrollment-Based Pay and Prospective Payment

DCYF’s Child Care Subsidy Program Administrator Jason Ramynke and Child Care Administrator Matt Judge gathered feedback on the new Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) rules on enrollment-based pay and prospective payment.

- [New Rule to Improve Child Care Access, Affordability, and Stability in CCDF](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “DCYF is working with Office of Child Care for clarification on provider changes” - can you share what your ask is and when you anticipate a response? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Their guidance simply stated that two providers can't be paid at the same time for the same child. We've asked for clarification on whether that means absolutely zero days of overlap, or if there's some kind of grace contemplated within the requirement. ● When did the feds rule go into effect for paying ahead of time? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ October 1. They are allowing states to apply for temporary waivers in cases like ours where the Legislature has the decision and funds are needed. Waiver requests are due November 30 and DCYF will be seeking waiver so the Legislature can decide. Many states are applying for waiver on these pieces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is the biggest concern overpayments? This seems to fit into what most families do - pay for care at the beginning of the month. Seems to fit the market better. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● That's what I infer. It seems you can't have much of an enrollment based/prospective pay system without periods of overlap like this so I'm hoping they meant this with the assumption of some kind of flexibility. We'll see. ● What about overtime rates? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Overtime is in addition to the base rates. A family can be authorized a full day and then an additional half day. We have experience in implementing enrollment-based pay; we did that for a few months during the pandemic and essentially, we'll be using the same model. The difference here is that we'll also be paying ahead of the month of service, adding another layer of complexity. ● When the Feds put the new regulations in effect, did they increase the amount of funding that they are giving to the States? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ No, it has not. We, like many other states, must seek it from our legislature in order to implement the changes.
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- What about the 11 million?
 - That increase wasn't tied to the new rules and wouldn't address any of these requirements.
- What would happen in a family where the mother works intermittently and does not bring kids 22 days?
 - We don't plan on changing family eligibility. If a family is eligible for part time care we would only be paying for part time care. Currently we have a rule where if families need more than 110 hours of care in a month then we're authorizing the full-time care; that's the 22 full days a month. When a family may need care only on Mondays we would authorize care for five full days. That is what we would pay based on enrollment and perspective. We would be paying based on what the family is eligible for and expecting to use with the provider.
- Where can we find the information in writing for overtime?
 - Overtime is specific to family eligibility, If the family is using more care than authorized, they can call 844-626-8687 and report a change in hours.
- How will school aged care work for centers? Right now, we have to compute two half days to make a full day, and we don't get paid automatically for any full days.
 - For licensed family homes, the rates are bargained. The school age rate during the school year is equivalent to 17 part days and five full days. That is based on the average participation a school age child has throughout the state due to late arrivals for example when the child is in care for an extra day. We haven't decided what that amount would be but for licensed family homes, that's the September to June rate, the July and August rate is based on the 22 full days. So similarly, we would have a monthly rate based on what the school age child is expected to participate and try to average that throughout the year.
- What happens to the monthly invoice?
 - Currently providers receive a monthly invoice and then they have to claim. In our future state there is no invoice to claim. Providers will be paid based on their enrollment. They'll receive an invoice that is remittance that outlines the payment versus what the provider needs to claim and claim payment for. That simplifies this process quite a bit. Also, to meet the Federal requirements, we're meeting that private market model where we're paying ahead of the month and based on enrollment.
- What about closures for in-service days, smoke or bad weather? How is that accounted for?
 - That can account for both school districts and providers based on closure days. That is part of the process today. Closure days are not eligible to be claimed unless you meet the very specific requirements around closure days. That is still something that we need to work through.
- Can a child attend two different facilities at the same time?
 - The federal guidance on this says no, but we are pushing back and asking for clarification that there is some kind of grace to account for provider changes, for example.
- We have a regular school day enrollment and options for after school care. Would we be granted funds for extended days?
 - Based on family eligibility, families could have a regular school-day authorization that may be full-time if care goes beyond five hours a day.
- What if the school district has a teacher work day do we still watch the children? Or do we get that day to be with our family?



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The current school-age authorizations include additional half-days to account for these days. It may be best to develop a standard rate by region to account for these. ● Why is there such a big difference on the pay rate between center and home care providers? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The CCDF rules require states to set their subsidy rates based on the rates that providers charge in the private market. That's the way Washington currently does it and those just reflect the rates that the different providers charge. The Feds do allow for an alternative approach based on cost of quality care and DCYF is 100% behind that. The legislature again must decide to make that change. ● Is there a new fact sheet regarding these rules? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There are resources linked at the bottom of this page about the new rules: 2024 Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Final Rule The Administration for Children and Families (hhs.gov). ● Why are we still 18 months out? Is it just due to funding? Why wasn't this new requirement budgeted for? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Legislature's last budget came out in spring of 2024 prior to the final rule's adoption. So, it doesn't include funding to cover this. We don't know what timeline they'll act on. In terms of our waiver request, we'll request the full amount of time, and if the legislature directs us to act sooner, we do what they say. ● You may be aware that DCYF applied for the 2024 Preschool Development Renewal Grant. We received approval for it and will be sending more detailed info in the coming days. This grant is for specific projects unrelated to the CCDF requirements, so I'm mentioning it just FYI. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Maybe we can link to the prior work in the provider supports feedback loop so folk can see how the state successfully used the fund during the last round? It could be a "stay tuned" item.
<p>Next Steps/Follow Up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Please reach out to Matt (matt.judge@dcyf.wa.gov) and Jason (Jason.ramynke@dcyf.wa.gov) with any follow-up questions.

2025 Work Plan/Provider Supports Charter Development Planning

DCYF's Community Engagement Administrator Erin Kerrigan and Community Engagement Manager Marlene White provided an update and asked for feedback on the 2025 meeting schedule, work plan and charter development.

- [ELAC Charter](#)

<p>Discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you hoping to finalize this new charter by January 2025? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, the plan is to have a completed Charter approved and posted by January. It will remain a living document though! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ That's a quick turnaround. Will there be additional ELAC Executive Session meetings for it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● January is our goal, but it's flexible. Because Provider Supports is a subcommittee to ELAC, a lot of the pieces of the charter already somewhat exist because ELAC has its own charter. The distinguishing pieces like focus/goals, we're working with the executive committee and plan to bring to the whole group in December for feedback. ● My term is up in January. Will we be doing applications for membership then or will you wait until the charter has been approved?
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ We are going to wait until we have an idea from the charter on what the representation and membership should look like and then we will move forward with recruitment. Right now, membership is pretty open; we do our best to try and make sure there is equal representation regionally.
Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please contact dcyf.communityengagement@dcyf.wa.gov with any follow up questions.

Closing Remarks/Adjourn

Next Steps/Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 3, 2024 and will be held jointly with the Early Learning Advisory Council (ELAC).
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